

hope to prove. While a specific audience may determine the length of a thesis statement and its placement in the introduction of an essay, your reader will expect your thesis statement to clearly identify the argument you plan to advance in your essay.

Your thesis—and by extension, your essay—should articulate an insight or position valuable enough to write about. You should not assert a position that is already accepted as true by you and your reader—why would you need to prove such a statement? A strong thesis captures your unique insight or approach to a topic and is persuasively supported by the evidence and analysis that follow in the paper.

Forecast

A forecast statement lays out the subtopics/subdivisions of support that will follow in your essay and does so in the order in which they will appear. Although you may decide to edit out your forecast statement in the final stages of the writing process, including an orderly forecast, early on, can assist you as you are feeling your way along in the organizational scheme and planning the direction of your proof. If left in your paper, a well-stated forecast can aid your reader in anticipating the direction your essay will take and help him/her to follow your logic and reasoning. An essay proving the claim that Dorothy Hahn has been a vital member of the community might include a forecast such as:

Forecast: She has used her art to create natural gathering places and to inspire further personal expression. She has also used her artwork as a tool for social commentary, helping us to consider our opinions about important topics of the day.

This forecast tells the reader that the essay will first talk about the impact Dorothy Hahn has had on the community by establishing gathering places for people and ways for people to express themselves. Secondly, the essay will talk about how she has used her art to express her opinions about socially relevant topics.

Your forecast should not be overly detailed or awkward: it should simply notify your reader, in a concise and manageable statement, of what is to come.

A Complete Introduction

Using the examples above, a complete introduction to a biography about Dorothy Hahn might read like this:

Lewis Mumford suggests that “the artist has a special task; that of reminding men of their humanity and the promise of their creativity.” If Mumford’s words are true, then artists play an important role in their communities, inspiring creativity and connecting citizens to their own humanity. Local artist Dorothy Hahn has risen to this “special task.” The 63-year-old artist is being remembered this month in a special tribute and gallery display hosted by the Downtown Art Gallery. An artist for over 40 years, Hahn has spent most of her life creating art in the Carlsbad community. Over the years, she has had ten shows at various local galleries, created the annual KidsART program that runs every August, and secured prominent homes for her sculptures and mobiles in most of the city’s public buildings and recreational facilities. Dorothy Hahn has been a vital member of the Carlsbad community and has contributed to the intellectual and aesthetic well-being of its citizens. She has used her art to create natural gathering places and to inspire further personal expression. She has also used her artwork as a tool for social commentary, helping us to consider our opinions about important topics of the day.